

Local Wellness Policy



To help combat childhood obesity, Congress passed a law requiring each local educational agency participating in USDA's school meals programs to establish a local wellness policy by the beginning of School Year 2006-2007.

Congress recognizes that schools play a critical role in creating a healthy environment for the prevention of childhood obesity, creating a healthy environment for combating problems associated with poor nutrition and physical activity. The law places the responsibility of developing a wellness policy at the local level so the individual needs of each school district can be addressed.

Schools must set goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness. Schools must also establish nutrition standards for all foods that are available on each school campus during the school day, with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity. Schools are required to measure the implementation of the wellness policy and to involve a broad group of individuals in its development.

There are four basic components of the Local Wellness Policies.

Nutrition Education

Physical Activity

School Based Activities

Nutrition Standards

Component 1: Setting Nutrition Education Goals

The primary goal of nutrition education is to influence students' eating behaviors. Effective Nutrition Education:

- ☒ Is interactive and teaches the skills they need to adopt healthy eating behaviors.
- ☒ Is offered in the school dining room as well as in the classroom, with coordination between the foodservice staff and teachers.
- ☒ Is communicated in consistent nutrition messages throughout the school, classroom, cafeteria, home, community and media.
- ☒ Is integrated into the health education curricula or core curriculum (e.g., math, science, language arts).
- ☒ Is taught by staff with appropriate training.

Component 2: Setting Physical Activity Goals

The primary goal for a school's physical activity component is to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities, maintain physical fitness, regularly participate in physical activity, and understand the short- and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthful lifestyle.

When setting goals for physical activity:

- ☒ At a minimum, students should have 60 minutes of physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week.
- ☒ Students should be given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through daily recess periods, elective physical education (PE) classes, walking programs, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum.
- ☒ Students should be given opportunities for physical activity through a range of after-school programs including intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs.
- ☒ Schools should work with the community to create an environment that is safe and supportive of students' physically active commute to and from school.

**North Dakota Department
of**

Public Instruction

**Dr. Wayne G. Sanstead,
State Superintendent**

**600 E. Boulevard Avenue, Dept. 201
Bismarck, ND 58505-0440**

Component 3: Establishing Nutrition Standards for All Foods Available on School Campus During the School Day

Students' lifelong eating habits are greatly influenced by the types of foods and beverages available to them. Schools must ensure that reimbursable school meals meet the program requirements and nutrition standards. They must also establish standards to address all foods and beverages sold or served to students, including those available outside of the school meal programs.

The following items should be considered when setting nutrition standards for all available foods during the school day. These standards should focus on increasing nutrient density, decreasing fat and added sugars, and moderating portion size.

- ☒ Set guidelines for foods and beverages in a la carte sales in the food service program on school campuses.
- ☒ Set guidelines for foods and beverages sold in vending machines, snack bars, school stores, and concession stands on school campuses.
- ☒ Set guidelines for foods and beverages sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities.
- ☒ Set guidelines for refreshments served at parties, celebrations, and meetings during the school day.



Component 4: Setting Goals for Other School-Based Activities Designed to Promote Student Wellness

Policies established under this category create a school environment that provides consistent wellness messages and is conducive to healthy eating and being physically active. Examples of policy language include:

- ☒ Provide a clean, safe, enjoyable meal environment for students.
- ☒ Provide adequate time for students to enjoy eating healthy foods with friends, scheduled as near the middle of the school day as possible.
- ☒ Prohibit use of food as a reward or punishment.
- ☒ Provide enough space and serving areas to ensure student access to school meals with a minimum of wait time.
- ☒ Prohibit denial of student participation in recess or other physical activity as a form of discipline, or cancellation of recess or other physical activity time for instructional make-up time.
- ☒ Ensure fundraising efforts are supportive of healthy eating.
- ☒ Provide on-going professional training and development for foodservice staff and teachers in the areas of nutrition and physical education.
- ☒ Provide student access to physical activity facilities outside school hours.
- ☒ Schedule recess for elementary grades before lunch so that children will come to lunch less distracted and ready to eat.
- ☒ Develop strategies for parents, teachers, school administrators, students, foodservice professionals, and community members to serve as role models in practicing healthy eating and being physically active, both in school and at home.

Steps for Establishing a Local Wellness Policy

There are no standard procedures for developing a school wellness policy. The following (adapted from the Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn <http://www.nasbe.org/healthyschools/>), are some basic steps to get you started.

1. Form a team

Students, parents, school foodservice personnel, school board members, school administrators and the general public should all be involved in developing a school wellness policy. Schools must measure how effectively the wellness policy is implemented and should designate at least one person, at the school district level or in each school, with operational responsibility for meeting the policy.

It is important to recognize any existing efforts underway in the school or community. This might help you determine whether a new team is necessary or whether you can establish a local wellness policy through existing efforts. If your school already has a school health council under the Coordinated School Health Program, or other similar infrastructure with Team Nutrition, they will be well-positioned to assist in the development of the policy. If your district is interested in establishing such a council, there are several national and state resources available.

2. Assess the needs

Before making plans to develop policies, you should assess the needs of your students. Look for data on the education and health status of students in your state through the following web sites:

www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/obesity/trend/

www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs

www.actionforhealthykids.org/AFHK/tools/profiles.php

These resources will help you assess your school's needs. To help you assess your school's needs:

Changing the Scene Improvement Checklist (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/support.pdf>) is a simple checklist to help you take an honest look at where things stand in your school and to help focus on exactly what needs to be done. The State of Michigan modified (http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Healthy/MI_checklist.pdf) this improvement checklist to make it more user-friendly.

School Health Index: a Self-assessment and Planning Guide (<http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/shi/>) is CDC's self-assessment and planning guide for physical activity and healthy eating. This tool enables schools to identify the strengths and weaknesses of nutrition policies and programs and develop an action plan for improvement.

Keys to Excellence: Standard of Practice for Nutrition Integrity (<http://www.schoolnutrition.org/KEYS.aspx?ID=1158>). The School Nutrition Association identifies the elements of a quality school nutrition program. This publication provides an easy-to-use evaluation form for assessing program quality and tracking progress.

3. Create policies

The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) has been systematically collecting state policies (http://www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/States/State_Policy.asp) on a number of school health topics. NASBE also summarizes state policies on any given topic (<http://www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/States/Coord%20or%20Advisory%20Council.html>).

The following resources are also available to assist you in policy development.

Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn (<http://www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/fithealthy.mgi>) is a school health policy guide developed by the National Association of State Boards of Education that provides sections on nutrition and physical activity policy development.

Changing the Scene: Improving the School Nutrition Environment—A Guide to Local Action

(<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/changing.html>) was developed by Team Nutrition to help schools take action in improving their nutrition environment. The kit contains chapter E of the Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn, Physical Activity, Healthy Eating, and Tobacco-Use Prevention.

CDC Guidelines for School Health Programs to Promote Lifelong Healthy Eating (<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/RR/RR4509.pdf>). These guidelines identify school-based strategies most likely to be effective in promoting lifelong healthy eating among young people.

CDC Guidelines for School and Community Programs to Promote Lifelong Physical Activity among Young People (<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/physicalactivity/guidelines/index.htm>). These guidelines identify the strategies most likely to be effective in helping young people adopt and maintain a physically active lifestyle.

4. Market the established policies

This very important step enlists widespread support for the goals and strategies of your school wellness policy. Steps that can assist you in building this support include:

- Involve those affected by the policy
- Anticipate, respond to, and involve critics
- Apply communication strategies
- Involve other student-serving agencies in the community
- Involve people from a variety of community groups

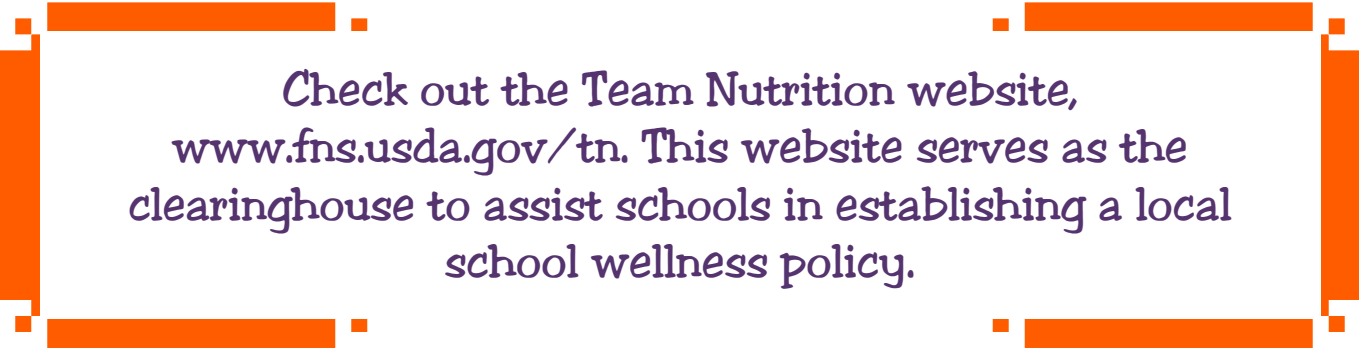
5. Implement policies

Developing and adopting sound policies are only the first steps. Implementing them requires good planning and management skills, the necessary resources, consistent enforcement, and widespread buy-in by school staff and the local community. Leadership, commitment, communication and support are the keys to your success.

6. Maintain the effort

A sustained effort is necessary to implementing and reinforcing these policies. Periodically assess how well the policy is being managed and enforced, and evaluate any financial impact to vending policies. Evaluation and feedback are very important in maintaining a sound, school wellness policy

Schools have all of SY 2005-2006 to plan their Local Wellness Policies. Use the tools and resources provided here to plan and implement the best wellness policy for your school. For additional information regarding Local Wellness Policies, contact DPI Child Nutrition Program staff toll-free (ND) at 1-888-338-3663.



**Check out the Team Nutrition website,
www.fns.usda.gov/tn. This website serves as the
clearinghouse to assist schools in establishing a local
school wellness policy.**



Team Nutrition Resources – Available Free to Schools

Team Nutrition (TN) is an initiative of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service with the goal to improve children's lifelong eating and physical activity habits. TN develops many materials for schools. A few selected resources are listed to get you started on improving the nutrition environment in your school. A complete list and on-line order form is at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/index.htm>. For information on the classroom curriculum and activities you can download, check out the educators resources at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Educators/index.htm>.



Changing the Scene-Improving the School Nutrition Environment

This tool kit can help local school teams take action to improve their school's nutrition environment. It has a variety of materials including an improvement checklist, video, PowerPoint presentation on a CD-ROM, brochures and "Healthy Eating" reprint from the school health policy guide, Fit, Healthy and Ready to Learn.

Making It Happen

This supplement to "Changing the Scene" tells the stories of 32 schools and school districts that implemented innovative approaches to improve the nutritional quality of foods and beverages offered and sold on school campuses. It includes a variety of materials developed by some of the schools and contact information for each story. Order your free copy and check out the stories from two North Dakota schools.

Team Nutrition: Getting It Started and Keeping It Going

This "how-to" guide for TN school leaders has three sections. It introduces TN, provides steps for new leaders to get a program underway, and helps leaders identify TN materials and how to use them in their program.

Join the Team

Schools are the key focal point for TN and are invited to enroll as "Team Nutrition Schools". Use the attached enrollment form to join the team. You will receive a resource kit of materials to help you plan and carry out activities for students and their families.

Other Online Resources for Healthy Students and Schools

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| ▪ Action for Healthy Kids | www.actionforhealthykids.org |
| ▪ Eat Smart. Play Hard | www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard |
| ▪ Food and Nutrition Information Center | www.nal.usda.gov/fnic |
| ▪ Minnesota Team Nutrition Tool Kit | https://fns.state.mn.us/FNSProg/NSLP/NSLPResource.htm#toolkit |
| ▪ National Foodservice Management Institute | www.nfsmi.org |
| ▪ Nutrition Explorations | www.nutritionexplorations.org |
| ▪ School Nutrition Association
(SNA formerly American School Foodservice Assoc.) | www.schoolnutrition.org |



Team Nutrition School Enrollment Form



Our Team Nutrition School Leader is:

☐ Ms. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Mr. ☐ Other

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Title _____ School's Name _____

Total Enrollment _____ Grades Taught _____

School District _____ School County _____

School Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____

E-mail Address _____

Please check one or more of the appropriate grade ranges:

☐ P (Preschool) Pre-K ☐ E (Elementary) K-5/6 ☐ M (Middle) 6-7/8 ☐ H (High) 9-12

We agree to

- Support USDA's Team Nutrition goal and values.
- Demonstrate a commitment to help students meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Designate a Team Nutrition School Leader who will establish a school team.
- Distribute Team Nutrition materials to teachers, students and parents.
- Involve teachers, students, parents, food service personnel, and the community in interactive and entertaining nutrition education activities.
- Participate in the National School Lunch Program.
- Demonstrate a well-run Child Nutrition Program.
- Share successful strategies and programs with other schools.

We certify our school does not have any outstanding overclaims or significant program violations in our school meals programs.

School Principal, Printed Name

School Food Service Manager, Printed Name

Signature

Signature

Date

Date

Use above form or print online at
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Join/enrollmentform.pdf>.
Fax 703-305-2549, or mail to
Team Nutrition
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 632
Alexandria, VA 22302



**What's Happening in
Team Nutrition Schools?
Check it out at: www.fns.usda.gov/tn. Click on
Other Schools.**

North Dakota Child Nutrition Programs

State Statistics for School Year 2004-2005



National School Lunch Program

Schools Served	421
District Sponsors	250
Students Eligible	103,996
Paid-Average Number Served Daily	48,259
Reduced Price-Average Number Served Daily	6,438
Free-Average Number Served Daily	18,586
Total-Average Number Served Daily	73,277

School Breakfast Program

Schools Served	303
District Sponsors	160
Students Eligible	79,789
Paid-Average Number Served Daily	5,597
Reduced Price-Average Number Served Daily	1,522
Free-Average Number Served Daily	8,170
Total-Average Number Served Daily	15,023

Summer Food Service Program

Sites	40
Program Sponsors	33
Breakfasts-Average Number Served Daily	3,221
Lunches-Average Number Served Daily	6,415

School Expenditures for Nutrition Programs

Food	\$15,295,294
Labor	\$12,771,918
Other	\$2,090,948
Total Expenses	\$30,158,160

Nutritional Quality of Meals

North Dakota students benefit from high quality meals prepared by dedicated school foodservice professionals. Federal regulations require that reimbursable meals adhere to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and provide adequate calories, protein, vitamin C, vitamin A, iron, and calcium.

Federal guidelines limit fat in reimbursable meals to no more than 30% of calories from fat and less than 10% of calories from saturated fat. Over the years, calories from fat in ND school lunch menus show a gradual decline from 36.5% in 1996/1997 to 29.07% in 2004/2005. Calories from saturated fat have decreased from 13% in 1996/1997 to 9.4% in 2004/2005. 70% of ND school menus meet all the nutrient standards of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

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Healthy Trends in School Lunch

School meals are healthy meals. School lunches must be planned to meet federal guidelines based on the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. The current guidelines recommend that no more than 30% of calories come from fat, and less than 10% from saturated fat. Regulations also establish a standard for school lunches to provide one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowances of protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, and calories. Range limits are also suggested for cholesterol, sodium and fiber.

Through the National School Lunch Program, children consume twice the servings of fruits and vegetables and greater amounts of grains and dairy than children who eat lunch brought from home or who leave school to eat lunch. Schools must offer at least two different servings of fruits and/or vegetables at lunch. Many schools have added salad bars in an effort to encourage students to eat more fruits and vegetables. Some schools have started offering a chef salad choice every day as a healthy alternative. Many schools offer low-fat or fat-free salad dressing choices.

No super-sizing here. School meals provide age-appropriate serving sizes – making schools one of the last places in the U.S. where you can purchase a meal with the recommended serving sizes.

Schools are required to offer low-fat milk. Milk is offered with all school breakfasts and lunches. By utilizing low-fat dairy products, students can easily reduce the amount of total fat and saturated fat that they eat each day. Most schools are now offering fat-free chocolate skim milk to entice more students into drinking milk. The fat-free chocolate milk has just as much calcium as white milk. It is better for students to drink chocolate milk than to avoid milk if they do not like white milk.

Food manufacturers have stepped up to the plate with healthier versions of familiar foods. Smart Pizza® is now available with 30-36% of calories from fat compared to regular pizza with 60% of calories from fat. Very few schools serve deep-fried foods. French fries, chicken nuggets, and chickenburgers are available in oven-baked forms that taste just as good as deep-fried versions. Manufacturers are also decreasing sodium, eliminating trans fats and increasing fiber and whole grains in typical school foods.



The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.